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4	Spokane, WA 99207 Phono: (500) 200, 6068
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5	Attorneys for Defendants
6	I DUTED OF A TEG DIGTRICT COURT
7	UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT EASTERN DISTRICT OF WASHINGTON
8	SPOKANE DIVISION
9	LONNIE TOFSRUD, an individual,
10	Plaintiff,) Case No. 2:19-cv-00371
11	vs.) DEFENDANTS' CITY OF
12	CITY OF SPOKANE, a municipal) SPOKANE'S, CRAIG MEIDEL'S,
	corporation in the State of) JUSTIN LUNDGREN'S AND Washington CRAIG MEIDL in his) DAVE STABEN'S ANSWER TO
13	Washington, CRAIG MEIDL, in his DAVE STABEN'S ANSWER TO personal and official capacity, JUSTIN AMENDED COMPLAINT FOR
14	LUNDGREN, in his personal and) DAMAGES AND JURY DEMAND
15	official capacity, and DAVE
16	STABEN, in his personal and official) capacity,
17)
18	Defendants.
19	
20	COME NOW each of the named Defendants, the City of Spokane, Craig
21	Meidl, Justin Lundgren and Dave Staben (hereinafter the Named Defendants), by
22	and through their counsel of record, Thomas W. McLane of the Law Firm of
23	and unough their counsel of fecold, Thomas w. Webane of the Law Tim of
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25	
26	DEFENDANTS' ANSWER TO AMENDED COMPLAINT FOR DAMAGES - 1 OF 26 Law Firm of Thomas W. McLane, PLLC 103 E. Indiana Ave., Suite A Spokane, WA 99207 Phone: (509) 290-6968

Thomas W. McLane, PLLC, and in answer to the Complaint, admit, deny, and allege as follows:

INTRODUCTORY STATEMENT

- The named Defendants admit the existence of claims asserted against the named Defendants. The named Defendants deny the validity of any claim against the named Defendants.
- 2. The named Defendants admit all were acting in their official capacities as it related to action taken concerning Plaintiff. The named Defendants deny the remaining allegations contained in Paragraph 2 of the Complaint.

JURISDICTION AND VENUE

- 3. Defendants admit that this Court has jurisdiction over this matter but deny the remaining allegations in Paragraph 3. Defendants deny the remaining allegations contained Paragraph 3 of the Complaint.
- 4. Defendants admit venue is proper in this judicial District but deny the existence of any inappropriate action by any or all of the named Defendants and therefore deny the remaining allegations contained in Paragraph 4 of the Complaint.

PARTIES

- 5. The named Defendants admit the allegations contained in Paragraph5 of the Complaint.
- 6. The named Defendants admit a lawsuit was filed against the City of Spokane, a municipal corporation. The named Defendants further admit that the Spokane Police Department is a department within the City and is often liable for the acts and omissions of the Spokane Police Department and its employees and agents. Except as admitted, the named Defendants deny the remaining allegations contained in Paragraph 6 of the Complaint, together with any and all inferences taken therefrom.
- 7. The named Defendants admit the allegations contained in sentences 1 and 2 of Paragraph 7 but deny the remaining allegations contained in Paragraph 7 of the Complaint, together with any and all inferences taken therefrom.
- 8. The named Defendants admit the allegations contained in Paragraph8 of the Complaint.
- 9. The named Defendants admit the allegations contained in Paragraph9 of the Complaint.

FACTUAL BACKGROUND

DEFENDANTS' ANSWER TO AMENDED COMPLAINT FOR DAMAGES - 4 OF 26

- 10. The named Defendants admit Plaintiff, as is with the other co-workers of the City of Spokane, is a valued employee who has received reviews and written commendations during his employment with Defendant City of Spokane. It is further admitted that Plaintiff worked in the Targeted Crimes unit until he was reassigned. Except as specifically admitted, the named Defendants deny the remaining allegations contained in Paragraph 10 of the Complaint, together with any and all inferences taken therefrom.
- 11. The named Defendants admit the first two sentences of Paragraph 11.
 The named Defendants deny the remaining allegations contained in Paragraph 11
 of the Complaint, together with any and all inferences taken therefrom.
- 12. The named Defendants admit all but sentence 5 contained in Paragraph 12. Sentence 5 is denied due to a lack of sufficient knowledge of the referenced but unidentified email.
- 13. The named Defendants admit the allegations contained in Paragraph13 of the Complaint.
- 14. The named Defendants admit the allegations contained in Paragraph14 of the Complaint.

- 15. The named Defendants admit sentences 1-4. The named Defendants deny the remaining allegations contained in Paragraph 15 of the Complaint, together with any and all inferences taken therefrom.
- 16. The named Defendants admit the allegations contained in the first sentence of Paragraph 16. Defendants lack sufficient knowledge to admit or deny the remaining allegations of Paragraph 16, and therefore deny the same.
- 17. The named Defendants lack sufficient knowledge to admit or deny the allegations contained in Paragraph 17 and therefore deny the same.
- 18. The named Defendants are aware that a case was not pursued, and that Lieutenant Stevens was contacted by Chief Criminal Prosecutor Driscoll pursuant to an office policy requiring referral of allegations of officer misconduct to the internal investigations unit of the subject agency. Except as admitted, the named Defendants lack sufficient information to admit or deny the remaining allegations contained in Paragraph 18 and therefore deny the same.
- 19. The named Defendants admit that Defendant Staben began a shift level investigation at the direction of Lt. Stevens. The named Defendants deny the remaining allegations contained in Paragraph 19 of the Complaint, together with any and all inferences taken therefrom.

- 20. The named Defendants admit the allegations contained in sentences 1, 2 and 9 of Paragraph 20 of the Complaint. The named Defendants admit that portion of sentence 3 which alleges that on January 15, 2018 that Plaintiff and Sergeant Preuniger were added to the IA, but deny the remaining allegations contained in Paragraph 20 of the Complaint, together with any and all inferences taken therefrom.
- 21. The named Defendants admit the allegations contained in sentences 1, 2, and 5 of Paragraph 21 of the Complaint. The named Defendants deny the remaining allegations contained in Paragraph 21 of the Complaint, together with any and all inferences taken therefrom.
- 22. The named Defendants admit the allegations contained in sentence 1 of Paragraph 22 of the Complaint. Defendants further admit the matter was reassigned by Stevens and that Sergeant Carr and Sergeant Waters handled the bulk of the investigation. Except as admitted herein, the remaining allegations contained in Paragraph 22 of the Complaint, together with any and all inferences taken therefrom, are denied.
- 23. The named Defendants deny the allegations contained in Paragraph23 of the Complaint, together with any and all inferences taken therefrom.

- 24. The named Defendants admit Plaintiff contacted the City's HR

 Department to complain about Defendant Staben. Except as specifically
 admitted, the named Defendants lack sufficient information to admit or deny the
 remaining allegations in Paragraph 24, and therefore deny the remaining
 allegations contained in Paragraph 24 of the Complaint.
- 25. The named Defendants admit Plaintiff was interviewed by Sergeant Carr and was read his administrative rights. Defendants deny the remaining allegations contained in Paragraph 25 of the Complaint, together with any and all inferences taken therefrom.
- 26. The named Defendants admit the allegations contained in the first sentence of Paragraph 26 of the Complaint. The named Defendants deny the remaining allegations contained in Paragraph 26 of the Complaint, together with any and all inferences taken therefrom.
- 27. The named Defendants admit the allegations contained in sentences 1, 2, and 3 of Paragraph 27 of the Complaint, but deny the remaining allegations contained in Paragraph 27 of the Complaint, together with any and all inferences taken therefrom.

- 28. The named Defendants admit sentences 1 and 5 of Paragraph 28 of the Complaint. The named Defendants further admit that Plaintiff provided a list of witnesses with his rebuttal statement whom were not interviewed. The named Defendants lack sufficient information to admit or deny sentence 3 and therefore deny the allegations contained therein. The named Defendants deny the remaining allegations contained in Paragraph 28 of the Complaint, together with any and all inferences taken therefrom.
- 29. The named Defendants admit the allegations contained in Paragraph29, except for the allegation that a miscarriage of justice occurred. This allegation is specifically denied.
- 30. The named Defendants deny the last sentence in Paragraph 30. Except as specifically denied, the named Defendants admit the remaining allegations set forth in Paragraph 30.
- 31. The named Defendants lack sufficient information to admit or deny the allegations contained in Paragraph 31 and therefore deny the same.
- 32. The named Defendants lack sufficient information to admit or deny the allegations contained in Paragraph 32 and therefore deny the same.

- 33. The named Defendants admit sentences 1 and 2 of Paragraph 33 and deny the remaining allegations contained in Paragraph 33 of the Complaint, together with any and all inferences taken therefrom.
- 34. The named Defendants admit the allegations contained in the first two sentences of Paragraph 34. Except as specifically admitted, Defendants deny the remaining allegations contained in Paragraph 34 of the Complaint, together with any and all inferences taken therefrom.
- 35. The named Defendants deny the allegations contained in Paragraph35 of the Complaint, together with any and all inferences taken therefrom.
- 36. The named Defendants lack sufficient information to admit or deny the allegations contained in Paragraph 36 of the Complaint and therefore deny the same.
- 37. The named Defendants admit that a report was submitted on or about November 20, 2018 by Jennifer Jackson regarding Plaintiff's complaint. The named Defendants deny the remaining allegations contained in Paragraph 37 of the Complaint, together with any and all inferences taken therefrom.

- 38. The named Defendants state that the report speaks for itself. The named Defendants deny the remaining allegations contained in Paragraph 38 of the Complaint, together with any and all inferences taken therefrom.
- 39. The named Defendants admit both individuals were issued PID letters by a third party over whom the named Defendants had no control. While Plaintiff has been assigned to a precinct, the named Defendants deny the two individuals were similarly situated. Except as specifically admitted, the named Defendants deny the remaining allegations contained in Paragraph 39 of the Complaint, together with any and all inferences taken therefrom.
- 40. The named Defendants deny the allegations contained in Paragraph40 of the Complaint, together with any and all inferences taken therefrom.
- 41. The named Defendants admit Plaintiff was originally assigned with varying duties, including but not limited to duties as outlined in sentence 1 of Paragraph 41 of the Complaint. The named Defendants further admit sentences 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 and 8 of Paragraph 41 of the Complaint. Except as to what has been specifically admitted, the named Defendants deny the remaining allegations contained in Paragraph 41, together with any and all inferences taken therefrom.

42. The named Defendants admit that Plaintiff was directed to report to the Academy to qualify for firearms certification and to review new and/or updated policies and/or procedures and/or to complete other departmental mandates such as crisis intervention training. Except as to what has been specifically admitted, the named Defendants deny the remaining allegations contained in Paragraph 42 of the Complaint, together with any and all inferences taken therefrom.

CLAIMS FOR RELIEF

FIRST CLAIM FOR RELIEF

42 USC § 1983 - Fourteenth Amendment

Count One: Violation of Plaintiff's Procedural and Substantive Due

Process Rights

(All Defendants)

- 43. The named Defendants reallege their admissions, denials and averments contained in Paragraphs 1 to 42 as if fully set forth herein.
- 44. The named Defendants assert the allegations within Paragraph 44 of Plaintiffs' Complaint constitute argument and/or legal conclusion, to which no

DEFENDANTS' ANSWER TO AMENDED COMPLAINT FOR DAMAGES - 11 OF 26

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response is required. To the extent a response is deemed necessary, the named Defendants deny the allegations contained in Paragraph 44 of the Complaint.

- The named Defendants assert the allegations within Paragraph 45 of 45. Plaintiffs' Complaint constitute argument and/or legal conclusion, to which no response is required. To the extent Plaintiff claims any of the named Defendants did not act under color of state law, the named Defendants deny that portion of the allegations contained in Paragraph 45 of the Complaint.
- The named Defendants assert the allegations within Paragraph 46 of 46. Plaintiffs' Complaint constitute argument and/or legal conclusion, to which no response is required. To the extent a response is deemed necessary, the named Defendants deny the allegations contained in Paragraph 46 of the Complaint, together with any and all inferences taken therefrom.
- The named Defendants assert the allegations within Paragraph 47 of 47. Plaintiffs' Complaint constitute argument and/or legal conclusion, to which no response is required. To the extent a response is deemed necessary, the named Defendants deny the allegations contained in Paragraph 47 of the Complaint, together with any and all inferences taken therefrom.

- 48. The named Defendants assert the allegations within Paragraph 48 of Plaintiffs' Complaint constitute argument and/or legal conclusion, to which no response is required. To the extent a response is deemed necessary, the named Defendants deny the allegations contained in Paragraph 48 of the Complaint, together with any and all inferences taken therefrom.
- 49. The named Defendants assert the allegations within Paragraph 49 of Plaintiffs' Complaint constitute argument and/or legal conclusion, to which no response is required. To the extent a response is deemed necessary, the named Defendants deny the allegations contained in Paragraph 49 of the Complaint, together with any and all inferences taken therefrom.
- 50. The named Defendants assert the allegations within Paragraph 50 of Plaintiffs' Complaint constitute argument and/or legal conclusion, to which no response is required. To the extent a response is deemed necessary, the named Defendants deny the allegations contained in Paragraph 50 of the Complaint, together with any and all inferences taken therefrom.
- 51. The named Defendants assert the allegations within Paragraph 51 of Plaintiffs' Complaint constitute argument and/or legal conclusion, to which no response is required. To the extent a response is deemed necessary, the named

Defendants deny the allegations contained in Paragraph 51 of the Complaint, together with any and all inferences taken therefrom.

52. The named Defendants assert the allegations within Paragraph 52 of Plaintiffs' Complaint constitute argument and/or legal conclusion, to which no response is required. To the extent a response is deemed necessary, the named Defendants deny the allegations contained in Paragraph 52 of the Complaint, together with any and all inferences taken therefrom.

Count Two: Violation of Plaintiff's Right to Equal Protection (All Defendants)

- 53. The named Defendants incorporate by reference their admissions, denials and averments contained in Paragraphs 1-52 as if fully set forth herein.
- 54. The named Defendants admit there is a policy prohibiting untruthfulness in the performance of official duties. The Defendants deny the remaining allegations contained in Paragraph 54 of the Complaint, together with any and all inferences taken therefrom.
- 55. The named Defendants deny the allegations contained in Paragraph55 of the Complaint, together with any and all inferences taken therefrom.

- 56. The named Defendants deny the allegations contained in Paragraph56 of the Complaint, together with any and all inferences taken therefrom.
- 57. The named Defendants assert the allegations within Paragraph 57 of Plaintiffs' Complaint constitute argument and/or legal conclusion, to which no response is required. To the extent a response is deemed necessary, the named Defendants deny the allegations contained in Paragraph 57 of the Complaint, together with any and all inferences taken therefrom.
- 58. The named Defendants assert the allegations within Paragraph 58 of Plaintiffs' Complaint constitute argument and/or legal conclusion, to which no response is required. To the extent a response is deemed necessary, the named Defendants deny the allegations contained in Paragraph 58 of the Complaint, together with any and all inferences taken therefrom.
- 59. The named Defendants assert the allegations within Paragraph 59 of Plaintiffs' Complaint constitute argument and/or legal conclusion, to which no response is required. To the extent a response is deemed necessary, the named Defendants deny the allegations contained in Paragraph 59 of the Complaint, together with any and all inferences taken therefrom.

60. The named Defendants deny Plaintiff is entitled to any of the relief sought in Paragraph 60 of the Complaint.

SECOND CLAIM FOR RELIEF

42 USC § 1983 – First Amendment

<u>Violation of Right to Free Speech – Public Employees</u>

(All defendants)

- 61. The named Defendants incorporate their admissions, denials and averments contained in Paragraphs 1-60 as if fully set forth herein.
- 62. The named Defendants assert the allegations within Paragraph 62 of Plaintiffs' Complaint constitute argument and/or legal conclusion, to which no response is required. To the extent a response is deemed necessary, the named Defendants deny the allegations contained in Paragraph 62 of the Complaint, together with any and all inferences taken therefrom.
- 63. The named Defendants admit the allegation contained in Paragraph63 of the Complaint.
- 64. The named Defendants assert the allegations within Paragraph 64 of Plaintiffs' Complaint constitute argument and/or legal conclusion, to which no response is required. To the extent a response is deemed necessary, the named

DEFENDANTS' ANSWER TO AMENDED COMPLAINT FOR DAMAGES - 16 OF 26

- 65. The named Defendants assert the allegations within Paragraph 65 of Plaintiffs' Complaint constitute argument and/or legal conclusion, to which no response is required. To the extent a response is deemed necessary, the named Defendants admit all actions taken were taken in their official capacities and under color of state law. The named Defendants deny any remaining allegations contained in Paragraph 65 of the Complaint, together with any and all inferences taken therefrom.
- 66. The named Defendants deny Plaintiff suffered any retaliatory actions and therefore deny the allegations contained in Paragraph 66 of the Complaint, together with any and all inferences taken therefrom.
- 67. The named Defendants deny the allegations contained in Paragraph67 of the Complaint, together with any and all inferences taken therefrom.
- 68. The named Defendants deny responsibility for the relief sought in Paragraph 68 of the Complaint.

THIRD CLAIM FOR RELIEF

Outrage

(All defendants)

- 69. The named Defendants incorporate by reference their admissions, denials and averments contained in Paragraphs 1-68 as if fully set forth herein.
- 70. The named Defendants assert the allegations within Paragraph 70 of Plaintiffs' Complaint constitute argument and/or legal conclusion, to which no response is required. To the extent a response is deemed necessary, the named Defendants deny the allegations contained in Paragraph 70 of the Complaint, together with any and all inferences taken therefrom.
- 71. The named Defendants assert the allegations within Paragraph 71 of Plaintiffs' Complaint constitute argument and/or legal conclusion, to which no response is required. To the extent a response is deemed necessary, the named Defendants deny the allegations contained in Paragraph 71 of the Complaint, together with any and all inferences taken therefrom.
- 72. The named Defendants assert the allegations within Paragraph 72 of Plaintiffs' Complaint constitute argument and/or legal conclusion, to which no response is required. To the extent a response is deemed necessary, the named Defendants deny the allegations contained in Paragraph 72 of the Complaint, together with any and all inferences taken therefrom.

73. The named Defendants assert the allegations within Paragraph 73 of Plaintiffs' Complaint constitute legal arguments, legal conclusions and/or a prayer for relief, to which no response is required. To the extent a response is deemed necessary, the named Defendants deny the allegations contained in Paragraph 73 of the Complaint, together with any and all inferences taken therefrom.

FOURTH CLAIM FOR RELIEF

Defamation

(All Defendants)

- 74. The named Defendants incorporate by reference their admissions, denials and averments contained in Paragraphs 1-73 of the Complaint as if fully set forth herein.
- 75. The named Defendants deny the allegations contained in Paragraph75 of the Complaint, together with any and all inferences taken therefrom.
- 76. The named Defendants assert the allegations within Paragraph 76 of Plaintiffs' Complaint constitute argument and/or legal conclusion, to which no response is required. To the extent a response is deemed necessary, the named

Defendants deny the allegations contained in Paragraph 76 of the Complaint, together with any and all inferences taken therefrom.

- 77. The named Defendants admit *Brady* information is made available to defense counsel and Plaintiff is named in a tort claim, but deny the remaining allegations contained in Paragraph 77, together with all inferences taken therefrom.
- 78. The named Defendants assert the allegations within Paragraph 78 of Plaintiffs' Complaint constitute argument and/or legal conclusion, to which no response is required. To the extent a response is deemed necessary, the named Defendants deny the allegations contained in Paragraph 78 of the Complaint, together with any and all inferences taken therefrom.
- 79. The named Defendants assert the allegations within Paragraph 79 of Plaintiffs' Complaint constitute argument and/or legal conclusion, to which no response is required. To the extent a response is deemed necessary, the named Defendants deny the allegations contained in Paragraph 79 of the Complaint, together with any and all inferences taken therefrom.

REQUEST FOR RELIEF

The named Defendants deny Plaintiff is entitled to the relief sought in the Request for Relief or to any relief whatsoever. Defendants further deny any and all allegations of liability, as well as the existence, nature, and extent of Plaintiff's claimed injuries and damages.

To the extent any allegation contained in Plaintiff's Complaint was not specifically admitted above, or a lack of knowledge claimed, it is denied.

DEMAND FOR JURY TRIAL

In accordance with F.R.C.P. 38 and pursuant to the 7th Amendment, Defendants hereby demand this matter appear before a jury.

AFFIRMATIVE DEFENSES

- Plaintiff's Complaint fails in part to state a claim upon which relief may be granted.
- 2. Any and all actions or conduct of which Plaintiff complains regarding the Defendants in either/both their individual and official capacity were reasonable at all times relevant hereto and were undertaken in good faith, and

DEFENDANTS' ANSWER TO AMENDED COMPLAINT FOR DAMAGES - 21 OF 26

without any requisite culpable intent of committing a violation of any of Plaintiff's clearly established constitutional rights.

- All actions taken by Defendants with respect to Plaintiff were undertaken for legitimate reasons and no unlawful factors motivated Defendants' actions towards Plaintiff.
- 4. Plaintiff's claim for damages, which are expressly denied, may be barred in whole or in part by Plaintiff's failure to mitigate his damages.
- 5. Defendants acted in reasonable belief that their conduct was in furtherance of the public interest.
- 6. Any damages allegedly suffered by Plaintiff were caused or contributed to by his own fault, neglect, lack of care, and/or failure to exercise due diligence, which serves or ought to serve to bar, and/or mitigate any damages claimed by Plaintiff.
- 7. The injuries and damages alleged by the Plaintiff were the fault of other entities or individuals not under the control of the Defendants.

- 8. At all relevant times, Defendants acted in substantial conformity with applicable policies or practices that are lawful and reasonable.
 - 9. All or part of Plaintiff's claims are subject to estoppel.
- 10. All or part of Plaintiff's claims have been waived by Plaintiff's own acts or omissions.
- 11. Defendant Staben's actions throughout his investigation of Plaintiff were reasonable.
- 12. Defendants are not the proximate cause of any or all of Plaintiff's alleged damages.
- 13. Defendants are entitled to qualified immunity pursuant to the Federal Civil Rights Act because they acted reasonably and in good faith under the settled law in the circumstances.
- 14. Any written or oral statements made or otherwise attributed to any or all of the named Defendants are protected by either a qualified privilege or an absolute privilege.

FURTHER, by way of reservation of rights, without waiver, named

Defendants specifically reserve the right to amend this Answer by way of adding
additional Affirmative Defenses, Counter Claims, Cross-Claims, or instituting
third-party actions which may be appropriate after further investigation and
discovery.

DEFENDANTS' PRAYER FOR RELIEF

Having fully answered Plaintiff's Complaint, the named Defendants request the following relief:

- A. Plaintiff's Complaint be dismissed with prejudice;
- B. Plaintiff take nothing from the case;
- C. The named Defendants be awarded their costs and attorney's fees under applicable law; and
 - D. For such other and further relief as the Court deems just and proper.

DEFENDANTS' ANSWER TO AMENDED COMPLAINT FOR DAMAGES - 24 OF 26

DATED this 10th day of February, 2020. LAW FIRM OF THOMAS W. McLANE, PLLC By: /s/ Thomas W. McLane Thomas W. McLane, WSBA #12226 Attorneys for Defendants DEFENDANTS' ANSWER TO AMENDED Law Firm of Thomas W. McLane, PLLC 103 E. Indiana Ave., Suite A COMPLAINT FOR DAMAGES - 25 OF 26 Spokane, WA 99207 Phone: (509) 290-6968

CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE I hereby certify that on the 10th day of February, 2020, I electronically filed the foregoing with the Clerk of Court using the CM/ECF system, which will then send a notification of such filing to the following: Daniel E. Thenell dan@thenelllawgroup.com Emerson Lenon emerson@thenelllawgroup.com By /s/ Thomas W. McLane Thomas W. McLane Law Firm of Thomas W. McLane, PLLC DEFENDANTS' ANSWER TO AMENDED 103 E. Indiana Ave., Suite A COMPLAINT FOR DAMAGES - 26 OF 26 Spokane, WA 99207 Phone: (509) 290-6968